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The present invention is generally related to a soft paper-based product comprising a cellulosic fibrous material, wherein an aqueous-based softening composition is incorporated into the paper-based product. The softening composition includes a silicone glycol, a silicone quaternary ammonium compound, an emollient, and water. The softening composition may be incorporated into a paper-based product such that the add-on level of the softening composition is between about 0.1% to about 10% by weight of the paper-based product. In some embodiments, the softening composition is an oil-in-water emulsion. The present invention is also directed to a method for forming soft paper products, where a cellulosic fibrous web is treated with an aqueous-based softening composition, which includes a silicone glycol, a silicone quaternary ammonium compound, an emollient, and water.